Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1.   (Currently amended) A method for managing a workflow process to bring execution time for said process at least closer to an expected deadline, said process including a plurality of work nodes and a set of priority levels associated with each work node, said method including the steps of:

generating for each work node a set of expected time to complete (ETC) values for each priority level, each ETC value denoting a cumulative time to complete the process including the time taken by the corresponding node to complete its activity for a selected priority level;

selecting for each work node a priority level that has a corresponding ETC value less than or equal to a remaining time available to meet said expected deadline; and

executing activities associated with said work nodes in accordance with said selected priority levels, thereby bringing execution time for said process at least closer to substantially meet said expected deadline.

2.   (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein each priority level is selected so that the difference between said deadline and the ETC value is a minimum.

3.   (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said ETC values are generated from historical data collected from completed process instances during a learning phase.

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4.	(Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said ETC values are generated using formula ETC = η + 2σ and wherein η is a statistical mean and σ is a statistical standard deviation of values collected during a learning phase.

5.	(Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said executing is performed by at least one business object.

6.	(Currently amended) A system for managing a workflow process to bring execution time for said process at least closer to an expected deadline, said process including a plurality of work nodes and a set of priority levels associated with each work node, said system including:

means for generating for each work node a set of expected time to complete (ETC) values for each priority level, each ETC value including a time taken by the corresponding node to complete its activity for a selected priority level;

means for selecting for each work node a priority level that has a corresponding ETC value less than or equal to a remaining time available to meet said <u>expected</u> deadline; and

means for executing activities associated with said work nodes in accordance with said selected priority levels<u>, thereby bringing execution time for said process at least closer to</u> ~~such that the~~ said expected deadline ~~is substantially met with a high probability~~.

7.	(Currently amended) A system according to Claim <u>6</u>~~5~~ wherein each priority level is selected so that the difference between said deadline and the ETC value is a minimum.

8.	(Currently amended) A system according to claim <u>6</u>~~5~~ wherein said ETC values are generated from historical data collected from completed process instances during a learning phase.

9. (Currently amended) A system according to claim $\underline{6}5$ wherein said ETC values are generated using the formula ETC = η + 2σ and wherein η is a statistical mean and σ is a statistical standard deviation of values collected during a learning phase.

10. (Original) A system according to claim 6 wherein said means for executing includes at least one business object.

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